

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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TAGS: OEXC, PINR, ELAB, FI

SUBJECT: EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL VISITOR PROGRAM
IN FINLAND

1. EMBASSY WISHES TO COMMEND THOSE WHO ARRANGED INTERNATIONAL VISITOR INTINERARY FOR KARI O. VIRTANEN (OCT 18 - NOV 17, 1976), WHICH PRODUCED TYPE OF RESULT POST IS AIMING FOR IN THIS PROGRAM. VIRTANEN RECENTLY MET AT HIS REQUEST WITH AMBASSADOR AND LABOR ATTACHE TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR TRIP, WHICH HE SAID GAVE HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME A POSITIVE VIEW OF THE US, REPLACING MISCONCEPTIONS HE HAD HELD BASED ON IMPRESSIONS FROM MEDIA AND FROM HIS PARENTS, WHO WERE COMMUNISTS. IN PRAISING HIS EXPERIENCE, VIRTANEN MADE OBSERVATIONS RANGING FROM UNIVERSAL POLITENESS OF AMERICANS HE ENCOUNTERED TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR FEDERAL SYSTEM.

2. ON LATTER POINT VIRTANEN, WHO WAS FINLAND'S WORKER DELEGATE TO 1976 ILO CONGRESS, SAID HE HAD IN PAST CRITICIZED USG FOR NOT RATIFYING MORE INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONVENTIONS. WHILE HE STILL DOES NOT ACCEPT US ARGUMENTS FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM ILO, HE SAID HE NOW UNDERSTANDS CONTEXT IN WHICH US POLICY EVOLVES. HE IMPLIED HE WILL BE MORE SYMPATHETIC TO US POSITIONS AS RESULT OF HIS REALIZATION THAT THEY

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REPRESENT CONSENSUS OF A NATION WHOSE REMARKABLE DIVERSITY

EQUALS THAT OF ALL OF EUROPE.

3. WE THINK THIS IS EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF SUCCESSFUL IVP
GRANT. VIRTANEN IS A PROMISING YOUNG LABOR OFFICIAL WHO
WILL PROBABLY OCCUPY INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT POSITIONS. HE
TRAVELS WIDELY IN HIS WORK (172 DAYS ABROAD IN 1975) IN BOTH
EAST AND WEST EUROPE. HIS GRANT PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO
BALANCE THIS TRAVEL AT A PROPITIOUS TIME IN HIS CAREER AND --
THANKS TO THE GRANTEE'S PERCEPTIVENESS AND THE USEFUL PROGRAM
HE HAD -- THE RESULTS WERE IMPRESSIVE.
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